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# State of Louisiana
## Governor's Office of Homeland Security
### and
### Emergency Preparedness

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# PRESS RELEASE

## LOUISIANA INTEROPERABILITY HIGHLIGHTED IN STUDY

**Baton Rouge, LA (September 22, 2011)** – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is highlighting Louisiana in a recent case study. The study, conducted by the Office of Emergency Communication (OEC), says Louisiana "has achieved one of the most sophisticated levels of communications usage in the nation" when it comes to interoperable communications among state and local entities.

In 2005, the State of Louisiana, in partnership with local jurisdictions, used federal, state and local funding to implement the Louisiana Wireless Information Network (LWIN) system which allows for local and state agencies to communicate on the same radio system. To date, there are approximately 62,000 users of the system throughout the state. LWIN currently consists of 113 towers and has an additional five towers that will come online by November 2011.  When the remaining five towers come online, this will mark the completion of the final phase of LWIN as it was initially envisioned.  The Statewide Interoperable Executive Committee (SIEC), which provides governance over LWIN, will continue to work with local agencies and look for opportunities to improve coverage gaps as they are identified.

"During hurricanes Katrina and Rita, it became very clear how much we needed a statewide communications system so our emergency response teams from all over could communicate more effectively. Today, a first responder from Monroe can deploy to New Orleans through mutual aid and immediately establish voice communications through LWIN using the same radio they use now for day-to-day response," said Interim GOHSEP Director Pat Santos. "This is just one more way we've been responding to our citizens and their needs when they are in harm's way," Santos added.

This study was part of OEC's report for the 10 year anniversary of the September 11th attacks. According to the report, OEC will continue to publish studies on emergency communications and response.   The report is attached and can also be accessed at http://www.safecomprogram.gov/library/lists/library/DispForm.aspx?ID=323.

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